

Caution: Cuddly When Drunk

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Caution: Cuddly When Drunk

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Summary

“Dance with him, Dream!” Sapnap insisted, “Hold him close and never let him go!”

“He’s drunk!” Dream hissed.

“It’s just a dance, dude!”

George looked up at him, those huge brown eyes, wide and glassy with drunkenness. “It’s fine, Dream. You can hold me.”

(AKA: George gets absolutely wasted, and Dream has to babysit without letting his feelings get in the way.)

What was supposed to be a calm party for a “small group of people” had quickly turned into a rager. It was a little weird to be at a rager for Bad’s birthday, but it seemed like Skeppy had invited *everyone*. As Dream walked into the rented house, he saw every streamer he knew and twice as many that he didn’t. The lockdown had recently been officially lifted, so everyone had dropped

everything to come out. It looked a lot more like a “The Pandemic is Over!” party than one for a birthday.

Not that Dream had any issue with getting absolutely wrecked at a huge party. Bad might have been feeling pretty weird about the strange shape his birthday was taking, but Dream could really use the relief. With the stress of fame, the long time stuck alone in his huge empty house, alone, waiting for the world to stop ending, and then moving in with his best friends (and the feelings associated with it), Dream needed a good time. He needed to spend some time *not* thinking about George.

He made a point to find the birthday boy first though, to give his well wishes before he allowed the night drip out the back of his skull with a blackout. Bad was standing with Skeppy, who was “gently” encouraging Bad to drink.

“I’ll drink a beer, maybe two, but I’m not going to take shots!” Bad protested, shoving the liquor away with disgust.

Skeppy pushed it back towards Bad, grinning the whole time. “Then you can have one or two shots! It’s the same serving size, shots are just... a speedrun!”

“I’m not going to 'speedrun' getting drunk! It’s only 9!”

“Fine! Maybe Dream will take one with me.” Skeppy turned to face Dream, holding one of the shots out to him. “You want?”

“Hell yeah I want.” Dream grabbed it, but paused before taking it. “Happy birthday, Bad. Hope you have a good night.”

Bad looked a little freaked out. “I can definitely try, but I wasn’t expecting *this* ! There are so many people, Skep!”

Bad and Skeppy immediately turned back to each other, quarreling away as they usually did. Dream couldn’t help but notice that, even though they were really arguing, they stayed close together, almost brushing each other, like they couldn’t bear to be separated. He wondered again if there was something more, but he didn’t want to ask, not after the sputtered, angry response he got last time.

He sighed and drained his shot.

Whether it was a lover’s spat or just an argument, Dream couldn’t bear to watch. It reminded him too much of George, who had become quite the issue for him once they moved in together. They had joked about a relationship for years, completely without any basis, but being in George’s presence was... intoxicating. He tried not to think about it.

Dream shook his head, a little angrily. That was exactly what he *wouldn’t* be doing. He had promised himself that he wouldn’t even *think* about George that night. The party was meant to be a fun romp where he let himself forget about the feelings he recently had to admit to himself. No thoughts, head empty, drunk only.

The party was already in full swing by that point, despite how early it was. Drunk people were everywhere, and some were already passed out, draped across furniture like decorations. Dream had a lot of catching up to do.

He weaved his way through the mob, waving and smiling at the people who recognized him and ignoring those who didn’t, until he found a path to the kitchen. The table was laden with every kind

of liquor, almost sagging from the weight of the bottles crammed into the small space. He nearly salivated at the sight, at the mere idea of getting absolutely blasted out of his gourd.

His reach for a bottle of bourbon was interrupted, however, by a familiar voice. *Please no...*

“Heyyyyyyyyyy,” George drawled, stumbling into Dream’s line of sight. “How you doing?”

“Hey, George. Drunk already?”

“I’m not drunk! I’m just... fuzzy.” George giggled, his cheeks tinged pink from liquor. His face split with that breathtaking grin of his, the one that showed all his teeth.

Dream wanted to kiss him. *Fuck*. “Wasn’t Sapnap supposed to watch you, Georgie?”

“Yeah, I guess soooo.” George lurched forward, pitching into Dream’s body. “But I’d much rather stay with youuuuuuu.”

“Okay, drunk, let’s find you someone who can babysit.” Dream patiently ignored the sudden warmth pressed against his body, scanning the room for a responsible adult that wasn’t himself.

George pouted, crossing his arms. “I don’t want a babysitter. I’m *older* than you.”

“You’re smashed. It’s not about age, it’s about state of mind.”

“You’re literally no fun at all.”

Dream sighed, heaving the surprisingly heavy George towards the living room. “You’re absolutely right. I’m no fun. You should hang out with someone else, okay?”

“Oh, so you don’t want to hang out with me?” George’s pout could rival any that Dream had ever seen, and he had many younger siblings who had all been incredibly demanding. It was kind of cute, honestly. Sober George would never have allowed himself to be so... needy.

“I love hanging out with you, Georgie, so very much, but I would really like to get drunk tonight, okay?”

The pout fell off George’s face in an instant. “Then come get drunk with me!”

Dream thankfully didn’t have to respond to that. He finally found Sapnap, who was sitting with Karl on the couch, about to take a double shot of something clear that couldn’t be water. “Sapnap, you promised!”

Sapnap’s face blanched, and he quickly set the glass on the table. “Oh, hey Dream! I wasn’t sure if you were going to make it tonight!”

“Oh, so that makes it better that you weren’t looking after George?” Dream demanded.

George shoved against the arms holding him up, careening through the wall of bodies to (thankfully) crash on the couch. “I’m not a fuckin’ kid, Dream.”

“Of course you’re not a kid! You’re just an adult who has never gotten this drunk before.” Dream glared down at Sapnap, who was trying to take the shot again. “An adult that a certain *someone* was supposed to be taking care of.”

Sapnap shrugged and downed the double. “Honestly, that was your mistake, Dream. I don’t know how you ever expected *me* to be the responsible one.”

“Yeah, that was a pretty dumb expectation.” Karl laughed, but, upon seeing Dream’s face, immediately stopped. “Though, Sapnap! Oh my gosh! You had a responsibility!”

“No, they’re right!” George called from his awkward position on the couch. “It was kind of stupid to think that *Sapnap* would be less of a hot mess than me!”

Dream took a deep breath and sighed, running his hands down his face. They were a little right, but it was still *incredibly* frustrating. “Wait here, George, and do not move. Karl, Sapnap, for literally *five* minutes, make sure he doesn’t go anywhere? *Please* ?”

“I make no promises,” Sapnap said, taking another shot.

“I’ll watch him,” Karl promised solemnly.

“Thank you, *Karl* .” With that, Dream turned on heel, determined to find someone to look after George. It wasn’t likely that anything bad would happen to him here, in a public place with so many people who had a career to lose (especially since George was a big name), but it didn’t hurt to be careful. Besides, it was his first time getting properly drunk, and Dream was a little bit protective.

The first person he found was Philza, who was the closest to a responsible adult that Dream could think of.

“Heyyyy there, Dream!” Phil called, a little too loud.

Dream’s eyes narrowed. “You’re drunk too?”

“Everyone is! It’s a party!” Phil smiled and tried to hand him a drink, but Dream refused.

“Sorry, Phil, I’m on a mission. Enjoy your night!”

“You too!” Philza turned back to the group he was with and began chattering away again, completely oblivious to Dream’s predicament.

Every other person that Dream could think of was either already babysitting a drunk person or drunk themselves. As a last ditch effort, he finally went to Bad himself. He didn’t want to ask at the man’s birthday bash, but he was quickly running out of options. Unfortunately, at some point, Skeppy had convinced Bad to drink something, because when Dream arrived, Bad had a healthy buzz going, and he was practically sitting in Skeppy’s lap as they talked with people around them.

With a sigh, Dream gave up. He had friend’s from his “real” life who threw parties, and he would just have to get drunk there and not invite George, or, maybe, he would be able to hold it against George later and make *him* babysit next time.

He wasn’t mad at George for wanting to get wasted and have a good time, and honestly, he wasn’t that frustrated to lose his chance to get drunk. He wasn’t much of a drinker, usually. The real issue was that he wanted to forget George and his perfect smiles, enticing eyes, soft hair, and lanky body, so taking care of the man wasn’t going to be helpful, especially since he seemed to be a cuddly drunk.

He picked his way through the din, carefully avoiding the unconscious bodies that littered the floor, until he found his way back to George, Sapnap, and Karl. Quackity had joined at some point, and he was even louder and more boisterous than usual. All three of them were encouraging George to drink even more.

For a moment, Dream was stunned by how pretty George was. His cheeks were bright red from the liquor by then, his eyes completely lost to the size of the grin splitting his face, and he was *dancing*. He was cradling a red solo cup in his hand and swaying and twirling to the beat of a thumpy song that reverberated through the house.

Dream was absolutely doomed.

“Hey Georgie!” Dream called, painting a saccharine tone over his voice.

“Dream!” George shouted, stopping the dance immediately, “You’re back!”

“Yes, I’m back. How are you feeling?”

“Gooooooooood. Come dance with me!” A hand was cast forward, beckoning to Dream.

“Um...”

“Oh don’t be a pussy, Clay. I won’t bite or anything.” George pushed forward, grabbing Dream’s arm and yanking him into the area between the couches, which was surprisingly empty.

As Sapnap and Quackity whooped, clearly enjoying Drunk George a little too much, Dream fell into George’s body, feeling the delicious warmth down his entire torso. “George, I-”

George didn’t respond. He just wrapped his thin arms around Dream’s waist and lay his head on Dream’s chest, letting out a soft hum of satisfaction.

Dream held his arms off George, completely unsure of what to do. George had *never* been this tactile before. They had, of course, hugged on several occasions, but nothing like *this*. He knew the man was drunk, but didn’t George realize what he was doing?

“Dance with him, Dream!” Sapnap insisted, “Hold him close and never let him go!”

“He’s drunk!” Dream hissed.

“It’s just a dance, dude!”

George looked up at him, those huge brown eyes, wide and glassy with drunkenness. “It’s fine, Dream. You can hold me.”

Dream looked down at his friend, heart swelling with wanting and hope, but he couldn’t do it. George was going to be *so* embarrassed the next day, and Dream didn’t need to make it worse. “You know I’d love to, George, but I’m not one to take advantage.” He laughed, trying to play it off as a joke, and gently untangled himself from George’s perfect embrace.

George’s face immediately fell into a pout again. “You’re no fun!”

“No, I’m not.” Dream sighed. “Maybe we should get you home, George?”

George’s eyebrows shot up beneath his hair, before his face settled on a satisfied smirk. “Oh, I get it. You’re not into PDA, so you want to take me home and do it there, eh Dreamie?”

“WHAT?!” It was like a slap in the face. Did George know about his feelings? Dream would *never* try to start a relationship with a drunk George, but did he actually *know*?

“It’s okay, *baby*. I know you want it...” George ran his hands down his neck, his chest, his torso, down to his hips, so slowly, so deliciously. It was driving Dream absolutely wild, and it kind of

hurt.

“What the hell are you doing, George?” Dream asked, trying to keep his tone even, nonchalant, maybe even a little judgemental.

For the briefest of moments, George looked thoroughly embarrassed, but then, he burst out laughing. “Oh my *GOD* ! You should have seen your *face* .” George collapsed to his knees, his butt hitting his calves as the giggles shook through him. “I know you don’t *actually* want me like that.” He had to brace himself on the couch to keep from completely falling to the ground as he laughed near hysterically.

A hopeful part of Dream heard a taste of bitterness in that last sentence, but the logical part stomped that feeling out. “You’re such a freak, George. I’m just trying to keep you from getting alcohol poisoning.”

After a few minutes, George managed to calm down enough to say, “You’re trying to keep me from getting drunk, I think.”

“That too.”

“Come on, man,” Quackity interjected, “It’s a party! Let George get a little fucked up!”

“George *is* a little fucked up,” Dream corrected.

George stood, a little shakily. “Only a little! I could keep going!”

Sapnap shrugged. “If the man says he can keep going...”

“You have no right to decide what to do with George, Sapnap,” Dream shot back, “You literally relinquished the responsibility.”

“I’m not leaving,” George declared, crossing his arms again and plopping down on the couch.

“My man!” Quackity shoved another drink into George’s hand.

George downed it immediately, maintaining eye contact with Dream as he did, as if challenging him.

Dream just rolled his eyes and found a good place to wait.

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It didn’t take long for the celebration to wind down. With everyone hitting the drinks as hard as possible, people had been dropping like flies since before Dream had even showed up. It only took another hour, maybe two, before everyone started to slump against the first surface they could find.

George had lost coherence long ago, after downing three shots, one after another, while Sapnap and Quackity cheered. He had spent most of the hour curled against Karl, dozing off and on, despite the noise. Karl and Sapnap and Quackity were all leaning against each other, not quite sleeping, but not really conscious either.

The only person in the entire house who wasn’t drunk was Dream. He had taken a beer or two, but

he knew that at least one person had to be aware and sober (for George). He just wished it wasn't him, especially since George had spent the night teasing him relentlessly. It was far from the escapism he had been praying for.

Suddenly, George's eyes popped open. He stretched, brushing an arm across Karl, and yawned, smacking his lips together. His gaze bounced around the room until, finally, he saw Dream. A sleepy smile burst across his face. "Hey..."

Dream couldn't help how his heart soared at that little moment, at being someone who made George smile. He forced himself to be calm, though, unwilling to reveal even a tiny bit of how much these little things affected him. "Hey there. How are you feeling?"

"Fuckin' great, actually," George slurred.

"So, still drunk?"

"I guess so... Could be drunker."

"I don't think you need to drink any more," Dream chided.

George sighed. "Probably right, honestly. I kinda wanna go to bed."

"You want me to find you a bed?"

"No... Can you take me home, please?"

Dream braced himself to say no, and started with, "I-"

"Dream, *please* ." George's eyes were so pretty, and he was practically batting his eyelashes, as if he knew that Dream would ultimately do whatever he wanted (and he was right).

"Georgie, come on... People are gonna think weird things..." That was part of the concern, but the bigger part was being alone with George, especially a drunk George.

"I'd let you take me home in *that* way if you asked, Dream, so why is it weird? Everyone knows it."

Dream decided to ignore the comment. "George, the plan was to stay the night in the house and have a breakfast thing."

"Yeah, but you don't want to do that, do you? I certainly don't. Come on, you have to admit you'd rather get to sleep in your own bed than whatever patch of floor is left."

George knew Dream far too well. "Fine, fuck it, let's go. I'm getting tired." He spun on heel, heading for the door. As he shrugged his jacket back on, he turned to see George with his lips around the neck of a bottle, chugging some frilly, flavored liqueur. "George!"

A sloppy, pleased smile slid into place as he wiped the liquid off his lips. "What?"

"Stop drinking! You literally admitted that you had enough! What could you possibly want more for?" Dream hissed, trying not to wake people.

George shrugged. "Courage."

Dream didn't even want to ask. With a long, drawn out, slightly bitter sigh, he grabbed George's arm and gently shoved him out the door.

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The ride home was relatively calm, thankfully. George's head was kind of swimming back and forth as they moved, too taken by the lights and sounds of the highway to bother Dream much. The rented house for the party was relatively close to the place Dream, George and Sapnap shared. Dream had decided if he was going to pay, it was going to be an easy commute for him.

George was honestly spoiled. If he still lived in the UK, he would have been stuck on the couch and thankful to not be on the ground. Dream spoiled him sometimes (a lot of the time), but he couldn't help it.

George perked up when they finally pulled into the driveway, and he was running to the front door with a desperate excitement that Dream couldn't quite place. George's bed wasn't *that* comfy (not that Dream would actually know).

After taking a moment to text a few people where they were and why, he followed George into the house, hanging his coat and basically picturing all the things he needed to do to go to bed, but he was interrupted by a soft hand pressed against his sternum that stopped him in his tracks.

"Dream," George murmured, standing right in front of him.

"George, what are you doing?" Dream asked, starting to back away.

"Dream, please, I just need to say this. I don't know when, if ever, I'll be this confident again, so I need to get it out. If you don't feel the same way, we can just forget this in the morning."

Dream's heart started thudding heavily in his chest, and he was sure George would be able to hear or feel it. It was almost embarrassing how much of a reaction George could cause him.

George closed his eyes, resting his hand against Dream's chest for support, and continued, "Dream, I'm in love with you."

"What?" Dream whispered, softly, hesitantly, fearfully.

George's gaze met Dream's, those soft eyes, and he repeated it, so sweetly that Dream's heart broke. "I'm in love with you, Dream."

"You're drunk."

"No!" George paused. "Okay, well, yes, but that doesn't make it any less true!"

"George, it's okay. Let's just get you to bed."

"No, Dream, stop! This is serious!"

"I know it's serious, which is why we will talk about it *tomorrow* ." Dream didn't believe, couldn't believe, that it was real. George was not *in love* with him. There was absolutely no way. He had just done his very drunk friend a favor, another one in a series, and George was smashed to bits and overly grateful. It fit with the rest of the night. He hardened his heart to the possibility, and started to guide George to his room.

George didn't like that plan at all. He stood on his tip toes, gripping Dream's shirt to pull him

down.

“What are you-?”

“Kiss me, Dream.”

Oh. Dream carefully pulled George’s fingers free from the fabric, taking George’s hands in his own. “George, I care about you so much, more than I can ever admit to you when you are sober, but I am not going to kiss you. There is absolutely no way you don’t regret this tomorrow morning, so we’re going to bed.”

George struggled against Dream’s grip futilely, due to his drunkenness as much as Dream’s strength. “Fuck that, Dream, kiss me! I know you like me too!”

“No.”

“Then let me go!”

Dream released him without a second thought, and George stumbled back, before catching himself on the arm of a couch. Once he stabilized himself, he threw a scowl at Dream, full of hatred.

“I love you, George.”

George had turned to face him with such venom, with a glare that could skin someone, but as Dream said that, his face softened a little. “I love you, Dream... I’m sorry... I shouldn’t have... I get that you don’t... Just forget it...”

“No, George, it’s not-” Dream stopped himself. There was no need to talk about it at that moment. “Just... Let’s get you to bed, okay?”

“Yeah, fine, whatever.”

George was sullen and quiet as they got ready. Dream tried to ignore it, sure they were just misunderstanding each other. They would settle it the next day, and everything would be fine. He would just have to ignore how great it felt to hear George say those words, to feel his hand on his chest, to be that close to a kiss...

He shook his head.

“You alright?” George asked around his toothbrush.

“Yeah, I’m fine. Just trying to stay awake,” Dream lied.

“Okay...”

Dream made George drink two full glasses of water before bed, and left another on the nightstand. There was a bucket on the floor, and a bell that George could hit if he needed help. Everything looked great, and George was under the covers, ready to sleep. Dream turned to leave.

“Uh, wait...” George’s voice was so tentative and small that Dream couldn’t help but listen.

“What’s up?”

“Can you stay with me...? Just until I fall asleep?”

“I don’t think-”

“No funny business! I promise! I just... I don’t feel well...” George confessed.

Dream sighed. “Yeah, okay. But I’m not getting in bed with you.”

“That’s fine.” The expression on his face didn’t seem to agree, though.

The only option was the floor, so Dream let himself fall to the ground next to the bed, leaning against the mattress heavily, as exhaustion started to tug him down.

“Here...” George handed Dream a pillow.

“I’m not spending the night,” Dream promised, putting the pillow behind his head. “Just until you fall asleep.”

“Of course.”

Dream leaned against the bed, tucking his head into the soft pillow, and relaxed with his eyes half open. Everything smelled like George, and he couldn’t help the small, blissful smile that took over his face. He imagined this was as close as he would ever get to what he wanted, so he savored it. Some part of him worried guiltily about taking advantage of his drunk friend, but they weren’t even touching.

George tossed and turned for a while, huffing and groaning over something Dream wasn’t privy to, before finally settling on his side. He was curled in on himself, facing where Dream was resting against the bed.

At the soft sound of snores, Dream started to get up, before one final thrash from George pitched him onto his stomach. George’s arm was tossed off the bed, finding where Dream was resting against it, and cinching tight.

It was exquisite, but Dream didn’t want to be trapped there all night. He tried to extricate himself, only to be met with sleepy *whines* that he couldn’t ignore. He decided to stay for a little while longer, certain that George would move at some point, and he would be able to go.

That was the last thought he had before he fell asleep. He never could say no to George.

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The next morning was harsh light and deep muscle soreness all over his body. Dream threw his arm out to stop the bright rays of sun from ruining his peaceful sleep and found himself restrained by a weight across his chest. There was a moment of confusion and mild panic until he caught the tips of familiar, dainty fingers resting above his heart.

George had never let go.

That filled Dream with a kind of warmth he couldn’t explain, even as he worried desperately about crossing a boundary. Sure, George was the one who trapped him all night, but shouldn’t he have tried harder to escape? Wasn’t inappropriate to allow, simply because he wanted it?

Now that he was awake, it felt even more necessary to leave, especially with his muscles screaming at him for falling asleep on the floor. He carefully lifted the arm and slipped out from

under it. As he turned to take one last longing look at the man sleeping soundly, he met George's lidded gaze.

"Dream?" He asked sleepily.

Dream shushed him gently. "Go back to sleep. It's early."

George reached out into the empty space, grabbing uselessly at the air, but eventually, he crumpled back into sleep, his arm hanging off the bed.

Dream wanted to slip back under that arm, but he turned and went to his own room instead.

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When Dream woke again, several hours later, he somehow felt worse than before. His muscles were no longer sore, and he was snuggled comfortably into his own bed, but George's arm wasn't draped across his chest possessively, and that made everything less bright.

Despite his desperate desire, he would not bring any of it up to George. The poor guy had been absolutely demolished by everything he drank, and he would probably feel even worse right around then. There was no need to remind him that he was so toasted he had confessed his "love."

Oh, George must have been in a terrible state. Dream wanted to ignore him, to stay in bed and mope, but he couldn't resist the pull out of bed to check on the poor guy. With soft footsteps, he padded across the carpet to George's door, before knocking lightly.

A loud groan burst through the wall, pained and sleepy.

"You alright, Georgie?" Dream asked.

George whined, drawing each syllable out for twice as long as necessary. "No, I'm terrible."

"You want help?"

There was silence for a bit, and it drew out until Dream started to think that George had just fallen back asleep, but the tiny, hesitant reply came through. "Yes, please..."

"Okay, wait there. I'll be back in a minute."

"I'm not going anywhere."

Dream tried to hold back a laugh. George must have been absolutely suffering. Dream hadn't even seen every drink George had taken, but the ones he *had* seen would be enough to lay someone out, especially someone who didn't usually drink.

After gathering some basic supplies, Dream walked back to George's door, and reached out to knock.

"Wait!" George interrupted. "Please... No noise. Just come in."

"Whatever you say," Dream murmured, gently pushing the door open.

George's room was pitch black. All the curtains had been drawn tight, and George was curled into a tiny ball, absolutely covered in blankets. He looked nauseated, but he hadn't thrown up during the night. Dream hoped that wasn't a bad thing.

"Hey there..." Dream said, carefully slipping into the darkness.

George groaned again. "Everything sucks."

"I know, George. I know. But I have some stuff that might help." Dream laid out the selection of remedies he brought: a glass of water, a huge bottle of ginger ale, advil, and an ice pack. "Alright, take four of these pills to really combat the headache. The water should help with dehydration, and the soda should help with the nausea."

George stared at him in awe, sitting up a little so he could start to drink stuff down. "What's the ice pack for?"

"For your head, when you lie back."

"Wow, you are really prepared..."

Dream ran a hand through his hair. "Let's just say I've been in your shoes before. And, I end up babysitting more than I mean to."

George didn't comment on babysitting, despite his adamant hatred of the term the night before. He just took his pills and chugged the drinks before sinking back into the sheets. His huge, pretty eyes looked up, meeting Dream's with such intimacy, and he murmured, "You take such good care of me, Dream."

Dream looked away quickly. "I try... Um, anyway... I'm gonna make you some breakfast, okay?"

"The ice pack?"

"Huh? Oh, right." Dream gingerly picked up the ice pack, making sure the towel was secure, and gently lay the pack across George's forehead. For a moment, he had to catch George's gaze again, but when the cold pressed into his skin, George's eyes slipped closed.

"Oh, that feels amazing, Dream," George gasped, tipping his head back and letting his lips part.

"I'm glad to hear it. I'm going to go make some food now!" Heat spilled into Dream's cheeks as he quickly made his exit and tried to ignore how much he wanted to kiss George before he left.

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Half an hour later, Dream had an entire feast made up for them both. Most of it was easy to make stuff, but he still felt a little proud of himself for managing to pull it together. A cheesy omelet, hash browns, toast, bacon, sausage, and a perfectly ripe banana for each of them. A great, greasy breakfast for a hangover.

He gently pushed George's door open and strode in with all the food lay out on a tray. George looked much better, and smiled at him gratefully. As he sat up, the half-melted ice pack slid down and plopped onto his leg.

“You are so good to me, Dream.” George repeated, grinning from ear to ear.

Dream carefully set the tray on top of George’s lap, retrieving the ice pack to refreeze it. “Hope you enjoy!”

“Wait, Dream, can... Can you eat with me?”

“Um...” Dream hesitated, but the face George made at his reluctance quickly made the decision for him. “Yeah, sure! Let me just grab my food.” The idea of eating with George was a blessing and a curse, especially if George remembered anything, but he really couldn’t say no either.

George was happily munching away at the food when he strode in. Dream clung to the tray of food nervously like he would be in trouble, shifting his weight back and forth as he waited by the door.

George just patted his bed, smiling. “Come sit with me.”

“Okay.”

They ate in silence for a while. George was too happy eating (it had probably been 16 hours since he last ate by that point), and Dream was too anxious, afraid to say the wrong thing or reveal something weird. He could still hear George’s whispered confession in his ears, and it haunted him.

“So...” George began, finally, after demolishing most of his plate, “Did you have fun last night?”

“Um, yeah?”

George looked up, pinning Dream with his expression. “Dream, you watched me most of the night, and you clearly took me home instead of enjoying the rest of the party. There’s no need to lie.”

Dream’s mind wandered to those small moments that he would treasure. The attempted dance, the hand pressed against his chest, the confession, the arm holding him to the bed. He tried not to grin like an idiot thinking about them, as if George would know the source of it. “No, honestly, it was fine. Besides, by the time we left, almost everyone was passed out anyway.”

“Oh, okay.”

“Um... How’s your head doing?”

George winced. “It’s still a little painful. Like food, water, and meds definitely helped, but I think I went a little too far.”

“I’ll say,” Dream grumbled.

“Hey! I was trying to do something!” George’s eyes went wide the second the words left his mouth.

“What? What were you trying to do?”

“Nothing! Nothing, just... Never been properly drunk before. That’s all.”

“Whatever...”

The silence stretched between them again, and it left Dream a little fidgety. He wished he could know what George was thinking. How much did he even remember?

George didn't speak again, even when his plate was completely cleared. He played with his fork for a little while, twirling it this way and that, and would occasionally open his mouth, only to snap it shut again.

"Something up?" Dream finally asked.

"Um... I want to know something, but I don't want to be awkward..."

"What do you want to ask?"

"Last night... Did I say anything... weird?"

Dream blanched, all color draining from him until he was a puddle of anxious goo on the floor.

"No! No, of course not! Just... you know... drunken stuff..."

George peered up at him, anxiety tracing lines into every corner of his pretty face. "What drunken stuff?"

"It was nothing, honestly! Not even a big deal!"

"What did I say, Dream?"

"Look, you're still hung over. We... we can deal with this later, alright? I don't want to push you or anything."

George scoffed. "I'm not that delicate."

"I know you're not delicate. I just want to make sure you have a clear head first, okay?"

"My head is fine." George crossed his arms. "Tell me."

"Fine, fine! Alright, what do you remember?"

George thought for a moment. "Um... Drinking with Sapnap and Karl, then you came in and I found you. You dragged me back... More drinking..." George started to blush, and he shot a furtive glance before looking away again. "I remember dancing... And teasing you... Uh, sorry about that..."

"It's fine," Dream sighed, "You were drunk."

"And then I drank a lot at once, and that's basically it... Oh! Wait, I remember waking up to the dead party, but I blacked out again..."

"You, uh, you decided to drink more on the way home."

George groaned. "Why did I do that?"

"You said it was for 'courage.'"

"Courage?" George swallowed audibly, his already pale face getting even paler. "Courage for what...?"

"Oh, it was... It was nothing."

"Courage for what, Dream?!" George demanded.

"It's not a big deal! You told me you were *in love* with me, but like come on." Dream laughed, "Like *that's* true! You were just super grateful for the ride home!"

George's eyes went wide. "Um... Right, yes. Definitely not true."

Dream's heart started to soar hopefully, and he felt stupid for it. There was no way, but he had to know. "Wait, do you?"

"Do I what?" George looked away, and he started to fiddle with the blankets in front of him.

"Don't play dumb, George. Do you love me?" Dream held himself perfectly still, trying not to reveal any of himself. It couldn't be true.

"Of course, I do, Dream. We've been best friends for ever, and I care about you immensely."

"You know what I mean."

"No, I don't," George lied.

Dream carefully reached over and took George's hand in his. "Please, George?"

George glanced at Dream's hand on his for a moment, his eyes tracing every curve, before he finally looked up at Dream. "Don't hate me, okay?"

Dream's heart started to thump again, pounding so loud and so desperate that it felt like it was trying to escape his ribcage. "I could never hate you."

George nodded once, but turned away again, staring at the dark curtains that were still holding back the light. "Um... I was talking to Sapnap the other night, and I sort of... confessed something to him. He told me I should tell you, but of course I couldn't do that. That'd be ridiculous."

"What, uh... What did he think you should tell me?" Dream swallowed. Was this happening? He could see the direction they were going, but was this even real?

"I'm... I'm getting there..." George paused, taking a deep breath to steady himself. His fingers worried at the fringe on the blanket, picking it apart and rolling it back together. "Well, Sapnap suggested the best way to tell you would be... to get drunk..."

"Oh..."

"Oh indeed..." There was another long silence, where neither knew what to say, until George suddenly twisted, his eyes far too sad for Dream's liking. "Why didn't you kiss me?"

"What? WHAT? You said you didn't remember."

"I lied. Dream, why didn't you kiss me? I could see the hope in your face when I confessed, but you wouldn't kiss me?"

"George, you were drunk! I didn't want to take advantage! I even told you I was sure you'd regret it."

"Oh... Oh, of course..." The fringe of the blanket was starting to pill, and George pulled little balls of fiber away, dropping them to the carpet. "I wouldn't regret it, Dream... I *am* in love with you."

Dream almost fell off the bed. "You are?"

“Yes.”

“George, I love you too. I am *in* love with you too. I just... I felt so bad. I thought you were doing all of that for me... Like you thought you owed me...”

George scoffed. “I don’t owe you shit, buzz kill! But I wouldn’t mind if we... did stuff.”

“Well, since you are still recovering, how about we cuddle for a while and see how you feel later?”

George grinned and immediately started clearing the bed, practically tossing the trays to the floor with his eagerness. “That sounds great.”

Dream wrapped his arms around George, burying his nose in George’s hair to lay a kiss on his head. It was perfect. More perfect than he could have ever imagined. George’s warm body pressed into his, soft hair brushing his chin, delicate fingers tracing patterns into his back, arms squeezing his sides. It was everything he had wanted that morning, but he knew George wanted it too, and that made it even better. There was no guilt, only contentment.

“You’re so good to me, Dream,” George murmured into his chest.

“I know.”

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